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SPECIFIC GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS: MINORITIES

Written statement*/ submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[11 January 2001]

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*/ This written statement is issued, unedited, as received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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ENG

1. The permanent abuse of minorities, also the national minorities in Europe especially the Roma, all over the Europe and Kurds in Turkey, have been not sufficiently taken into account. There are serious violations of fundamental rights of these minorities and the lack of any authority for a successful appeal available for the victims of these violations at national level and inadequacy in considering the relevant cases at international level shall be considered by the Commission.

2. Several raids of Italian police on Roma settlements and treatment of police during series of operations to Roma caused serious concerns regarding the situation of Roma in this country.

3. According to the European Roma Rights Center (a member of Helsinki International Federation), in raids on 3 March 2000 and 28 May 2000 in Rome, carried out by he Italian police, violence and use of abusive language, destruction of Roma's properties and the use of excessive force have been taken place.

4. There are some cases of apparent hatred in Italian media against Roma, e.g. an article in Panorama on 22 August 1999, Il Sole-24 Ore on 31 August 1999 and Corriere della Sera on 22 July 1999 following the Kosovo crisis and flee of Roma from Kosovo to Italy. This issue must be taken into consideration and necessary measures have to be taken, in order to prevent the extension of xenophobia in this country.

5. The ODVV believes that there is a clear failure on behalf the Government of Turkey in seeking a peaceful solution for Kurdish problem in this country. The systematic and total ignorance of Kurd identity and resistance of this state to accept a distinctive identity for Kurd minority in Turkey shall be regarded as an obvious violence of fundamental rights of Kurds.

6. Any assertion or statement, especially in media with respect to Kurd identity can be confronted with the imprisonment or various charges in Turkey.

7. Pinar Selek, a socialist, has been in jail for 2 years. Her imprisonment was in result of her sociological research on PKK militants.

8. Nadire Mater, a journalist, has been faced in July 2000 a conviction for 12 years only because of interviews which have been published in her book. Guler Yildiz, the reporter of Cinar newspaper in Marcin has been charged only for quoting from Mater's book.

9. According to the European Roma Center in its letter to the Macedonian general prosecutor on 13 July 2000, an apparent violence and ill-treatment by police has taken place against Roma in Stip (central Macedonia) on 26 May 2000.

10. There are many cases of exodus of Roma, violence and ill-treatment against them and also segregation in schools regarding the Roma children, especially in Hungary and the Czech Republic.

11. The Organization for Defending Victims of Violence (ODVV) believes that the Commission on Human Rights shall try to find a final solution for the problem of racism and intolerance towards minorities in the Europe.